A Tranquil BOND

Abdul Basit Abdallah

A Tranquil Bond

2nd Edition

Abdul Basit Abdallah

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

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Dedication

I dedicate this work to my dear friend and elder brother, ***Abubakar Siddiq Yussif*** and his wife to be, ***Fatima Abdul Hamid Alhassan***. May Allah bless their union and their entire generation. May they be soul mates in this life and in Jannah.

Introduction to the Second Edition

I am glad to introduce this second edition of "A Tranquil Bond". After a careful review, I realized the earlier work contained some errors that needed to be corrected and was incomplete in certain aspects. It is my hope that this work benefits its readers, in particular, the couple for whom it was written. I implore my readers to not hesitate to reach out to me via icetee1010@gmail.com, if they come across any shortcoming while reading. And kindly do keep me, my parents, the couple for whom it was written, and in fact, the Muslims in totality in your sincere prayers.

Abdul Basit Abdallah

27th November, 2024.

Introduction to the First Edition

Prior to my friend's wedding, I thought of something to gift him but concluded at the end that there was nothing worthy to gift anyone than kind words and good admonishing. Annals of academic history had record of a number of counsels written by scholars to their children, students and the general public. What truly inspired me to come up with this work was a book by the renowned ***Shaikh Abu Ishaq Al – Huwaini***[1], titled "*Al-Inshirah fi Adab al-Nikah*". In his introduction, the author mentioned the reason why he wrote the book.

His wedding it was, and a friend suggested to him to buy copies of the book "*Adab az-Zifaf fi as-Sunnah al-Mutahharah*" by his Shaikh, ***Shaikh Muhammad Nasiru – Deen Al – Albani*** (1999) and distribute to his guests as present. After going through the book, he had a second thought which was to come up with a new piece and fill the gap left by his teacher. For this, I wanted to also be in their line, even though what I have compiled in here is but few pages.

I tried my best to summarize the book "*Adab az-Zifaf fi as-Sunnah al-Mutahharah*". Notwithstanding I have left quite a lot of information, I believe the ones I have gathered will benefit readers of this work. Withal, I have included in it a lot that are not in the book mentioned. May Allah bless this book, its writer and reader. A special prayer goes to our Muslim brothers and sisters oppressed in different parts of the world, especially Palestine. May Allah's sustenance reach them, wherever they are.

Abdul Basit Abdallah

13th October, 2024.

[1] ***Shaikh Hijazi Muhammad Yousuf Sharif*** demised on the 17th of March, 2025, in Doha, Qatar. May Allah have mercy on him.

A Reason to Devotion

One of the astonishing concepts is the creation of mankind and even more beautiful are the stages mankind passes through before becoming a baby. From a sperm to a congealed blood then foetus (lump) then bones then covered with flesh and finally a human being, surely, The Creator deserves endless credit.

After the first man was created and endowed with emotional feelings, he started feeling lonely and then The Lord (ﷻ) created from him – his ribs to be precise – a partner in the form of a wife. He was given an opposite gender because that was who he needed and subsequently, that would be what his male children would need, a female partner, the same way the females would need a male partner. Anyone who goes contrary to this will end up with regret, depression and anxiety.

As children, humans live their lives exploring and happy until they reach adolescence. Then they start developing attraction to their opposite gender. Even so, that is not a stage to be misbehaving around and so, adolescents need parents or guardians to help them understand and to be able to abstain from early intercourse and its related activities. After a while, they grow into adults. Adulthood comes with a number of challenges, among which is a strong desire for the opposite gender. This is no joke and you cannot cheat nature. However, Allah (ﷻ) has made it lawful for the one who is in such state to seek for the consent of a lady of his liking and that of her parents and then stay with her until death do them part, a process called *marriage*.

Since the union brings good luck to mankind's existence on earth, it has been the tradition of generations to honour and celebrate couples on their wedding day. Yes, marriage ensures procreation and the continuity of humans on earth. It solves man's loneliness and also promotes his/ her complete vitality through proper child nurturing.

However, the religion of Islam has put in place, a set of regulations for the one aspiring to marry, the suitor at the courting stage and also the one already married. Anyone ready to marry should look for themselves a damsel or a thayyib [divorced or widowed (after their waiting period, which is 3 ovulation periods and 4 months 10 days, respectively)]. Well, it is equally fine if they opt for matchmaking, provided they would be given the necessary opportunity for a short courting to know and understand each other.

When you finally find that soul that you desire to be your partner for the rest of your life, the next task is to perform what we call Istikhaarah. The word "*Istikhaarah*" is an Arabic root word of *"Istakhaarah – Yastakheeru"*, which means to request for a decision. Islamically, it refers to the act of requesting for Allah's counsel over a decision that you are about taking. Hence, you perform Istikhaarah to request Allah's assistance and direction towards the right decision. However, the popular act of people requesting some individuals to perform it for them is inappropriate.

How to perform Istikhaarah

When a man or a woman is confronted with a situation then they should perform *Istikhaarah* just as the messenger (ﷺ) taught his companions (رضي الله عنهم). *Istikhaarah* is performed over two or multiple options from which one is supposed to decide or even over a single option, to seek for the Lord's guidance in order not to make a wrong choice.

First, one should start by praying a two (2) raka'ats Nafl prayer. The choice of surah after Al – Fatihah should be under one's own discretion and not mandatory to recite some specific surahs. Al – Imam An – Nawawi prescribed reciting Surah Al – Kafirun in the first rak'ah and Surah Al – Ikhlas in the second rak'ah. However, as Ibn Hajar pointed out in Fath Al – Baari that even though they are relatable to the instance, there is no evidence backing them (to make it mandatory to stick to only them). *[Fathul Baari, 11, p185, Al – Maktabatus Salafiyyah]*

When one is done with everything and is about saying the salaam to end the salat then he/ she should recite the following lines, known as the supplication for *Istikhaarah*:

«اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَسْتَخِيرُكَ بِعِلْمِكَ، وَأَسْتَقْدِرُكَ بِقُدْرَتِكَ، وَأَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ فَضْلِكَ الْعَظِيمِ، فَإِنَّكَ تَقْدِرُ وَلَا أَقْدِرُ، وَتَعْلَمُ وَلَا أَعْلَمُ، وَأَنْتَ عَلَّامُ الْغُيُوبِ، اللَّهُمَّ إِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ خَيْرٌ لِي فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي، أَوْ قَالَ: عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ، فَاقْدُرْهُ لِي، وَيَسِّرْهُ لِي، ثُمَّ بَارِكْ لِي فِيهِ، وَإِنْ كُنْتَ تَعْلَمُ أَنَّ هَذَا الْأَمْرَ شَرٌّ لِي، فِي دِينِي وَمَعَاشِي وَعَاقِبَةِ أَمْرِي، أَوْ قَالَ: فِي عَاجِلِ أَمْرِي وَآجِلِهِ، فَاصْرِفْهُ عَنِّي، وَاصْرِفْنِي عَنْهُ، وَاقْدُرْ لِي الْخَيْرَ حَيْثُ كَانَ، ثُمَّ أَرْضِنِي. قَالَ: وَيُسَمِّي حَاجَتَهُ» رواه البخاري (١١٦٢)

Allahumma innee astakheeruka bi'ilmika. Wa astaqdiruka biqudratika. Wa as'aluka min fadlikal azeem. Fa'innaka taqdiru walaa aqdiru. Wa ta'lamu walaa a'lamu. Wa anta allaamul guyuub. Allahumma in kunta ta'lamu anna hadhal amra khairun lee ***fee deenee wa ma'aashee wa aaqibati amree***. Faqdurhu lee wa yassirhu lee thumma baarik lee feehi. Wa in kunta ta'lamu anna hadhal amra sharrun lee ***fee deenee wa ma'aashee wa aaqibati aamree***. Fasrifhu annee wasrifnee anhu waqdur liyal khaira haithu kaana thumma ardinee.

(O Allah, I seek the counsel of Your Knowledge, and I seek the help of Your Omnipotence, and I beseech You for Your Magnificent Grace. Surely, You are capable and I am not. You know and I know not, and You are the Knower of the unseen. O Allah, if You know that this matter is good for me in my religion and in my life and for my welfare in the life to come, then ordain it for me and make it easy for me, then bless me in it. And if You know that this matter is bad for me in my religion and in my life and for my welfare in the life to come, then distance it from me, and distance me from it, and ordain for me what is good wherever it may be, and help me be content with it)

After that then they say the salam. The supplication can also be delayed, to be said after the salaam, provided the niyyah (intention) for what to be asked for has preceded it. This is to say, it is not valid to pray a voluntary Nafl and

then say, the Istikhaarah supplication afterwards, if one has not already intended to observe Istikhaarah before the Nafl.

NB:

1. *You can equally replace the bolded words with **fee aajli amree wa aajilihi**.*
2. *One can also mention their motive (in Arabic) instead of saying hadhal amra.*
3. *The hadith on Istikhaarah is reported by Jabir bun Abdillah As – Sulami (ﷺ).*
4. *Istikhaarah can be performed for more than once over the same subject.*
5. *The one who performs it is not mandated to see something in sleep.*

After the *Istikhaarah*, it is expected that in sha Allah, the person may feel at ease with the right choice. The next step is to proceed with the processes of marriage, according to the local customs and traditions. Even so, anything contrary to Islam must be avoided. In our part of the world, the would-be husband is often required to provide sets of clothing termed as *lefe* in Hausa, for the would-be wife. It may or may not be included to the amount of dowry stated at the tying of the knot. We should note that the amount stated is what is considered as the dowry.

Dowry

Dowry refers to the amount of money the would-be husband pays to his would-be wife for her hand in marriage. The significance of it is that she was previously not legal for him to have intercourse with but now that she has been made legal, he should compensate her for that.

The amount is either paid in cash or in the form of asset. It is paid to the elders of the wife, to be given to her in full, with no deduction whatsoever. A dowry can also be promised by the husband, on condition that he will pay later and when it is time to honour the promise then he should pay up the promised amount. In a case where he did not state a sum, the wife should be

paid an amount equal to the dowry of a lady of her class at the time of marriage.

If the husband happens to pass on before payment, then this should be considered a debt to be paid before sharing his wealth to the group of inheritors. In the case of *Khul'u*, where the wife requests for an official nullification of the marriage, she is to pay back the dowry to the husband. At such instance, he may decide to collect it or gift it to her.

Over here, I would like to debunk the popular saying that marriage nowadays is expensive and that is the reason why a lot of the youth fornicate. Well, that point is baseless! There has never been a point in a man's life where fornication was expensive than marriage! Whoever wanted to marry had to strive a little harder. I believe the story of prophet *Musah* (A.S.) herding flocks for a lady's hand in marriage should be enough evidence for this. Read Suratul Qasas, verses 27 – 29.

However, the best of marriages is the one made easy for the husband, where easy does not necessarily mean cheap. Meaning, anything that he can afford and does not place too much burden on him. This I believe is not something hard to grasp. In the event where your daughter's hand is sought for marriage and she likes the person, as a parent, you are supposed to give her out for marriage, in the absence of a prohibition factor, be it religious, health or financial.

So far as they like each other and he can cater for her needs, you as a parent do not have the mandate to deny their union over the reason that he cannot satiate her ***wants*** or probably yours! Whoever does so is sinful for immoralities the daughter might likely engage in as a result and Allah is oft forgiving, he might even forgive such daughters. Read Surah An – Nur, verse 33. History has it that the best dowry ever paid was that of *Ummu Sulaym (ﷺ).* She accepted the reversion of *Abu Talha (ﷺ)* to Islam as her dowry.

Niyyah (Intention)

The differential factor between a good-looking deed and an actual good deed is intention. The one who commits a deed with the intention of pleasing Allah and abiding by His rules is rewarded. On the other hand, the one whose intention is any other reason aside that is denied the reward. The famous hadith of *Umar bun Al – Khattaab (ﷺ)* is enough evidence for this. Also, intentions are not spoken out loud except for Hajj or Umrah (Pilgrimage to Makkah, the holy land).

Tying of the knot

An event often attended by religious, tribal, community, family heads and loved ones from all walks of life. The tying of the knot is what is termed as "Seegah" or "Aqdu – Zawaj". It involves the public declaration of request and acceptance between the two families of the would-be couples. Before tying of the knot, a Waliy is required from the wife's end and a Wakil from the husband's end. A Waliy is either a father (all the way up to grandfathers) – or paternal uncle in the absence of the father, a son (all the way down to grandsons) or an *Aasib*, who is a brother from the same father. A brother from the same mother but different father or a relative is not considered an Aasib.

In the Islamic inheritance system, an Aasib is an inheritor who has no fixed fraction but waits for the As'haabul fard, those who inherit specific fractions to be served, and then takes the remainder. The *Waliy* must ensure that the would-be husband is the would-be wife's likeness. For instance, a disbeliever is not of same likeness with a believer.

It should be noted that marriage is not complete without the presence of a *Waliy*. Over here, a man is preferred for his insight and ability to make rational decision, devoid of emotion. It does not in any way deprive a woman of a right. A woman's innocence easily gets her deceived by someone's speech or their appearance. Therefore, one of a man's duties in a woman's life is to be her protector. Waliy in this sense should be sane, rightly guided and not under duress.

An act worth mentioning over here is the prohibition of *Shigar*. Well, Shigar means the act of marrying off one's daughter to another, in return for that of the other's hand in marriage without dowries between the two. This is not acceptable in Islam.

Any marriage conducted without a Waliy should be nullified but the wife is entitled to her dowry if intercourse took place between them. In the absence of a Waliy or where it happens that there are two or more Waliys – for instance, a father and his brother – then the Sultan – in an Islamic setting or the community leader or the tribal leader should be her Waliy. It can even be an Imam, if he has such influence and authority. Tying of the knot is an activity, usually administered and officiated by an Islamic judge or an Imam of a Jum'ah congregational masjid. It is sunnah for the Imam to begin by reading the *Khutbatul haajah and the three verses.*

Khutbatul Haajah

إن الحمد لله نحمده ونستعينه ونستغفره ونعوذ بالله من شرور أنفسنا ومن سيئات أعمالنا. من يهده الله فلا مضل له ومن يضلل فلا هادي له وأشهد أن لا إله إلا الله وحده لا شريك له وأشهد أن محمدا عبده ورسوله.

All thanks and praises be unto Allah. We thank Him, seek His assistance and ask for His forgiveness. We again seek refuge in Him from the evilness of ourselves and the vileness of our deeds. Whosoever Allah guides, none can misguide and whosoever Allah misguides, none can guide. I bear witness that there is no deity worthy of worship except Allah, Him alone and He has no partners. And I bear witness that Muhammad (ﷺ) is His slave and messenger.

Three Verses

1. Suratu Al – Imran (3:102):

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ حَقَّ تُقَاتِهِۦ وَلَا تَمُوتُنَّ إِلَّا وَأَنتُم مُّسۡلِمُونَ﴾ [آل عمران: ١٠٢]

O you who believe! Fear Allah (by doing that He has ordered and abstaining from all that He has forbidden) as He should be feared. [Obey Him. Be thankful to Him, and remember Him always], and die not except in a state of Islam (as Muslims) with complete submission to Allah.

2. Surah An – Nisa (4:1):

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ ٱتَّقُواْ رَبَّكُمُ ٱلَّذِى خَلَقَكُم مِّن نَّفۡسٍ وَٰحِدَةٍ وَخَلَقَ مِنۡهَا زَوۡجَهَا وَبَثَّ مِنۡهُمَا رِجَالٗا كَثِيرٗا وَنِسَآءٗۚ وَٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ ٱلَّذِى تَسَآءَلُونَ بِهِۦ وَٱلۡأَرۡحَامَۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ كَانَ عَلَيۡكُمۡ رَقِيبٗا﴾ [النساء: ١]

O mankind! Be dutiful to your Lord, Who created you from a single person (Adam), and from Him (Adam) He created his wife [Hawwa (Eve)], and from them both He created many men and women and fear Allah through Whom you demand your mutual (rights), and (do not cut the relations of) the wombs (kinship). Surely, Allah is Ever an All-Watcher over you.

3. Suratul Ahzab, (33:70) and the verse after it:

﴿يَـٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلَّذِينَ ءَامَنُواْ ٱتَّقُواْ ٱللَّهَ وَقُولُواْ قَوۡلٗا سَدِيدٗا ٧٠ يُصۡلِحۡ لَكُمۡ أَعۡمَـٰلَكُمۡ وَيَغۡفِرۡ لَكُمۡ ذُنُوبَكُمۡۗ وَمَن يُطِعِ ٱللَّهَ وَرَسُولَهُۥ فَقَدۡ فَازَ فَوۡزًا عَظِيمًا﴾ [الأحزاب: ٧٠-٧١]

O you who believe! Keep your duty to Allah and fear Him, and speak (always) the truth ٧٠ He will direct you to do righteous good deeds and will forgive you your sins. And whosoever obeys Allah and His messenger (SAW) he has indeed achieved a great achievement (i.e. he will be saved from the Hell-fire and made to enter Paradise.

أما بعد:

And thereafter/ Having said that:

Then he states his purpose.

Marriages should be publicised and not to be conducted in secret, to separate it from fornication and to encourage the youth to follow suit. Part of populating it is the provision of two just witnesses. Without them, marriage is invalid. Afterwards, couples are wished and prayed for as follows:

بارك الله لكما، وبارك عليكما وجمع بينكما في خير

Baaraka – LLAHU lakumaa. Wa baaraka alaikuma. Wa jama'a bainahumaa fee khayr.

(*May Allah bless you both and unite you in goodness*)

On wedding days, couples are celebrated. It does not hurt to have an entertainment and merriment eve. However, anything contrary to Islam is not permitted. Today's practice where the bride is made to sit with the groom amidst a gathering of men is prohibited. Likewise, a groom's attendance of the bride's event amidst a gathering of females. If you think it is fine because that is his/ her spouse, then what about the rest of the population that is not legal for them!

A Happy Home

A good home starts right on the evening of the wedding. The Islamic shariah system has a set of conducts for both couples to observe. The obedient gets to experience a happy home. The otherwise is filled with sorrow, regret and anxiety.

Of the acts prescribed for couples are:

1. ***Gentle treatment between couples during nuptials***

It is preferred for the groom to present to his bride a drink as a kind gesture. On their wedding night, the messenger (ﷺ) handed over a milk drink to his beloved A'isha (رضي الله عنها). As a lady, she lowered her gaze out of shyness but the woman who adorned her, *Asmaa'u bint Yazeed bun As – Sakan* (رضي الله عنها) instructed her to take it from his hand (ﷺ) and she did and drank from it.

2. ***Placing one's hand on the bride's forelock and supplicating for her***

The groom must place his hand on the bride's forelock and pray for her by saying the Basmalah, praying for her for blessings and then saying the following:

اللهم إِنِّي أَسْأَلُكَ مِنْ خَيْرِهَا، وَخَيْرِ مَا جَبَلْتَهَا عَلَيْهِ، وَأَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ شَرِّهَا، وَشَرِّ مَا جَبَلْتَهَا عَلَيْهِ

Allahumma innee as'aluka min khairiha wa khairi maa jabaltahaa alaihi.
Wa a'udhu bika min sharriha wa sharri maa jabaltahaa alaihi.

(*O Allah! I ask you for the goodness in her and the goodness upon which You created her and I seek refuge in You against her evilness and the one with which she was created*)

The one who buys a new ride is supposed to place his hand on it and say the same supplication.

3. ***Praying two Raka'at Nafl by the couples together***

On the wedding night, the couples are to pray two Raka'at Nafl (Voluntary) together. The groom is to lead and the wife must stand behind him. After they are done with the prayer, the groom should supplicate by saying:

اللهم بارك لي في أهلي وبارك لهم في اللهم اجمع بيننا ما جمعت بخير وفرق بيننا إذا فرقت إلى خير

Allahumma baarik lee fee ahlee wa baarik lahum fiyya. Allahumajma' bainanaa maa jama'ta bikhairin. Wa farrik bainanaa idhaa farrakta ilaa khairin.

(O Allah! Bless me for my family and bless them for me. Allah, unite us as long as You unite us in goodness, and separate us, if You do separate us, in goodness,)

4. What to say before intercourse

Right before intercourse, the husband should say the following:

بسم الله اللهم جنبنا الشيطان وجنب الشيطان ما رزقتنا

Bismillah Allahumma jannibnaa – shaytaan. Wa jannibi – shaytaana maa razaktana.

(*O Allah! Distant us and what you provide us (of a child) from shaytaan*)

The messenger (ﷺ) said,

"If Allah destined for them a child, shaytaan (the devil) will never overpower him". Reported by Al – Bukhari (3271)/ (3283), Ahmad (2178), Tirmidhi (1092).

5. Abstinence from Anal intercourse

Anal sex is a practice frowned upon by the Shariah and whoever engages in it is likely to incur the wrath of Allah (ﷻ).

6. Performing Ablution or Ghusul in-between courses of intercourse

The groom is to perform ablution after an intercourse, if he intends to reiterate. This practice boosts his energy level. However, performing ghusul is better.

Ghusul (Ritual bath)

Ghusul is performed for a number of reasons, including the one mentioned. Other reasons include: Janabah (post intercourse ritual impurity), wet dream, menstruation, postnatal blood, reversion to Islam.

To perform Ghusul,

i. Declare your intention at heart.
ii. Wash your hands to the wrist.
iii. Wash off dirt from your reproductive organ and anus.
iv. Perform ablution but delay washing the feet.
v. Dip both palms in the water and rub the head with the damp palms. This helps hair pores that opened during discharge of semen to close. Else, water entering those pores afterwards may cause headache.
vi. Fetch a handful of water and pour over the head three times.
vii. Wash the entire body by ***rubbing*** alongside. It is encouraged to begin with the right side of the body before the left and the upper part before the lower part. However, dividing the body into two and beginning with the right is not mandatory if not in the ghusul for the dead as this was reported in the hadith of Ummu Atiya (ﷺ)
viii. Wash your feet.[2]

7. Couple's bath together

Islam encourages couples to bath together as this strengthens the bond between them.

8. Ablution or Tayammum after intercourse

[2] Al – Bukhari (248) & (249).

It is meritorious for couples to perform ablution or *Tayammum* after intercourse, before sleeping. However, this practice does not free them from their Janabah (ritual impurity). For that they are to perform Ghusul.

Tayammum

In the absence of water or in a situation where one is unable to use it due to cold weather, injury or the likes of it, Tayammum is performed. To perform Tayammum, do the following:

i. Declare your intention at heart
ii. Strike the Sa'id (pure earth and sand, sun-dried bricks, stones, snow or dirt) with both palms.
iii. Blow off the dust by blowing air onto the palms.
iv. Wipe the face.
v. Wipe both hands to the wrist, beginning with the right before the left.

9. Abstinence from wives in their menstruation

It is forbidden in Islam to have intercourse with one's wife during her menstruation. The one who for some reason could not control himself is to give out a dinar or half a dinar as recompense for his sin. However, he can enjoy his wife the best way he can, so far as he abstains from intercourse. After her period, he is permitted to engage her after she has performed the ritual bath.

10. Coitus interruptus

The practice of removing one's reproductive organ from that of his wife before ejaculation is termed as **Azl**, which is *Coitus Interruptus* in English. Even though this is permissible in Islam, it is not encouraged. Also, it must be known that this practice does not prevent whatever Allah has destined of a child.

11. First morning after wedding

The husband is to pay a visit to his close relatives who participated in the marriage ceremony to greet and pray for them for good fortune. They should also pray for same in return for the couples.

12. The compulsion of having a bathroom in the house

In the past, bathrooms were not common in houses, unlike today. Even so, some parts of the world or even some parts of urban areas today depend on public commercial bathhouses. Islam highly discourages this act, for it is compulsory to have at least a bathroom in the house.

13. The prohibition of spreading bed secrets

To spread whatever transpires between oneself and their spouse is to engage in one of the gravest sins.

14. Banquet

Holding a banquet in honour of one's marriage is necessary. This however, is to be held after the wedding day. In case is held on the wedding day then that is okay. The most preferred practices with regards to this are as follows:

- *Hosting the banquet three days after the consummation.*
- *Inviting righteous attendees, be it rich or poor.*
- *Slaughtering a sheep or more provided one can afford.*

It is also okay to have a feast with the food available even if it is without meat. The rich are also encouraged to contribute in such event. However, it is a sin to invite or serve only the rich on such occasions. Mandatory it is on the one invited to honour the invitation. If he is not fasting, then he is to feast but if fasting then he should only pray for the couples. In case he decides to break the fast at that instance then he is at liberty to do so, if the

fast happens to be voluntary and not a compulsory fast. He is not to make up for voluntary fast broken at such instances. Again, he is to decline invitation of a feast, involving disobedience to Allah.

15. A prayer for the couples

After the merriment, the guest is to pray for the couples by saying,

اللهم اغفر لهم وارحمهم وبارك لهم فيما رزقتهم

Allahummagfir lahum Warhamhum Wa baarik lahum feemaa razaktahum.

(O Allah! Forgive them their sins, be Merciful unto them and bless for them that You have provided for them).

Or

اللهم أطعم من أطعمني واسق من سقاني

Allahumma At'im man at'amanee. Wasqi man saqaanee.

(O Allah! Feed and quench the one who fed and quenched me)

Or

أكل طعامكم الأبرار وصلت عليكم الملائكة وأفطر عندكم الصائمون

Akala ta'aamakumul abraar. Wa sallat alaikumul malaa'ikah. Wa aftara indakumu – saa'imuun.

(May the righteous eat your food. May the angels send blessings onto you. And may the fasting individuals break their fasts in your home).

Any of the above mentioned is acceptable. Then they should add,

بارك الله لك

Baarakallahu laka

[May Allah bless you (the husband)]

Or

اللهم بارك فيهما وبارك لهما في بنائهما

Allahumma baarik feehimaa wa baarik lahumaa fee binaa'ihimaa

(O Allah! Bless them and bless their consummation)

Or

على الخير والبركة وعلى خير طائر

Alal khairi wal barakah. Wa alaa khairi taa'irin.

[(May Allah unify you) upon goodness and may He grant you the best fortune]

16. Serving the invited guests

The groom is to serve the male invited guests but in case the need be, the bride can do that so far as she is properly covered in a Hijab.

Conditions for Hijab

- The hijab must cover the entire body with the exception of the face and the hands to the wrist.
- It must not be an adornment.
- It must be close in texture or thick and not gauze.
- It must not show her body shape.

- It must not be perfumed.
- It must not resemble men's wear.
- It must not resemble the dress of the disbelieving women.
- It must not be an extravagant wear.

17. Music and tambourine

Permission is granted for women who would want to announce the marriage as way of entertainment to sing songs that do not contain impermissible words such as words of disbelief or profane words and to play alongside the Duff (tambourine), which is a shallow one-headed drum with loose metallic disks at the sides played especially by shaking or striking with the hand. [Meriam Webster] The Duff is said not to have a jingle.

18. Prohibitions

The groom must not permit acts prohibited in the deen, such as:

- Posting pictures on walls.
- Shaving off eyebrows by some brides for beautification purpose.
- Applying artificial fingernails and nail polish
- Shaving off beard by some grooms
- Wearing golden wedding ring.

First of all, gold is prohibited for men. Additionally, this is an imitation of the disbelievers and so, is not allowed for both couples. The London magazine "Women" on 19th March, 1960, p.7, published a response by Angela Talbot on the question "Why is the wedding ring placed on the left ring finger?". She said:

"It is said there is a vein that runs directly from the finger to the heart. Also, there is an ancient origin whereby the bridegroom placed the ring on

the tip of bride's left thumb, saying: "In the name of the father" on the first finger, saying: "In the name of the son" on the second finger, saying: "In the name of the Holy Ghost", on the word "Amen", the ring was finally placed on the third finger where it remained.

[Al-Albani, Muhammad Nasir al-Din (1420 AH/1999 CE) (1409 AH). *Adab az-Zifaf fi as-Sunnah al-Mutahharah*. 1st ed. Beirut: al-Maktabah al-Islamiyyah].

The vein said to run directly from the finger to the heart is called *"Vena Amoris"* or Vein of Love.

Not only for men but Muslim women as well are prohibited from wearing golden rings. The same applies to golden bracelets and *At – Tauq* (A tight choker – style necklace).

19. Showing kindness towards one's wife

The Muslim man is supposed to be kind to his wife. The messenger (ﷺ) used to be kind towards his wives and they appreciated him for that.

The mother of believers, A'isha (رضي الله عنها) reported:

"The messenger called me to watch while the Ethiopians were playing with their sticks on Eid day. He said, O fair lady! Do you wish to watch them (play)? I said, yes. He made me stood behind him and then he lowered his shoulders so I could watch them. So, I placed my chin on his shoulder and my face to his cheek. I watched through in-between his ear and shoulder while he was saying "Here you are! O children of Arfudah". He would ask "Are you satisfied" and I would reply "No" just to measure how dear I was to him and to let my colleague wives know my position to him. When I got satisfied, he asked, and I said: yes. [Bukhari (5236) and Muslim (892), Ahmad (24296), an-Nasa'i (1595) and Sharh Mushkil al-Athar (292)]

20. Pieces of advice for couples

- Couples must be each other's keeper towards obeisance to Allah and His messenger (ﷺ). Under this, the husband must ensure the education of his wife, especially of relating to the prerequisite obligations of every Muslim/ Muslimah. He is to teach her if capable but if not, ask on her behalf or get her enrolled in an Islamic institution where such is taught. In such case, he should as well enrol. Their obligation afterwards is to imbibe the knowledge acquired into their children.

- Each partner must fulfil their duties towards the other. The husband is to provide for his wife's physiological needs, security, among others. The wife is also to take care of house duties and chores, including cooking and washing. The wife has neither right to demand equal right from the husband, nor has the husband the right to maltreat or beat her. Although there has been a debate over whether the duties of a wife to her husband at home is an obligation, the preferred and most authentic is the fact that it is an obligation, provided it is within her capabilities. Even so, husbands are encouraged to assist their wives when they have the chance as did the messenger (ﷺ). [Bukhari (676), Ahmad (24948) and Tirmidhi (2489)]

Conflict Resolution

Marriage like life, is not a fairy tale and certainly, does not always end in happy-ever-after. In it are good times, bad ones and even a confusion state. To think peace comes automatically with marriage is to think wrongly. In this life, to earn is to strive. Hence, for you to have a peaceful home, you need to pray and work for it.

Let us tap from Ibn Kathir's exegesis on Surah An – Nisa (4:128-130) before discussing conflict resolution from the western perspective.

Allah (ﷻ) said:

"And if a woman fears cruelty or desertion on her husband's part, there is no sin on them both if they make terms of peace between themselves; and making peace is better. And human inner-selves are swayed by greed. But if you do good and keep away from evil, verily, Allah is Ever Well-Acquainted with what you do".

"You will never be able to do perfect justice between wives even if it is your desire, so do not incline too much to one of them (by giving her more of your time and provision) so as to leave the other hanging (i.e. neither divorced nor married). And if you do justice, and do all that is right and fear Allah by keeping away from all that is wrong, then Allah is Ever Oft-Forgiving, Most Merciful".

"But if they separate (by divorce), Allah will provide abundance for everyone of them from His Bounty. And Allah is Ever All-Sufficient for His creatures' need, All-Wise'.

[Surah An – Nisa (4:128-130)]

The situation between a husband and his wife is usually one of three:

1. Desertion
2. Agreement
3. Divorce

Allah describes various marital situations:

First, when the husband shows signs of estrangement or emotional distance, the wife is allowed to give up part of her rights [like her turn (nights he is supposed to spend with her), maintenance, etc.] in order to maintain the marriage. If the husband accepts, it's permissible and not sinful for either. Hence, Allah says: “There is no sin on them both if they make terms of peace between themselves; and making peace is better.”

The phrase “And human inner-selves are swayed by greed” implies that people naturally have tendencies to hold tightly to their rights, yet making peace is more virtuous.

This is exemplified by the case of Sawda bint Zamʿa, one of the wives of the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ). When she grew older and feared he might divorce her, she gave up her night to ʿAisha, the Prophet's beloved wife. The Prophet accepted this, and the verse was revealed in relation to this situation.

Various hadiths confirm this. For instance:

Ibn Abbas reported that Sawda said, "Do not divorce me, O Messenger of Allah. I will give my night to Aisha." He accepted, and the verse was revealed.

Aisha herself narrated that the Prophet used to fairly divide time, and Sawda, fearing divorce, gifted her night to Aisha.[3]

Many scholars like al-Bukhari, Muslim, at-Tirmidhi, and others narrate variations of this story confirming its authenticity.

The verse also addresses polygamy, acknowledging that full emotional equality among wives is not humanly possible. Yet, men are instructed not

[3] Al – Bukhari (5212) and Muslim (1463).

to favour one to the complete neglect of another, leaving her in a state like that of a suspended wife—neither fully married nor divorced.

Verse 130 ends with the consolation that if reconciliation fails and separation happens, Allah will provide for both spouses from His vast bounty.

Conflict is defined as "a process which begins when one party perceives that another has frustrated or is about to frustrate, some concern of his". Thomas (1976)

Causes of conflict

- Poor communication
- Financial disagreements
- Time management
- Insecurity
- Differing parenting styles
- Stress
- Family interference, etc.

Well, Pondy's model of organizational conflict is applicable even between couples. ***Pondy (1967)*** explained conflict to be a dynamic process consisting five stages, which are:

1. Latent conflict: this is when there is a possibility of a conflict to arise in the future.

2. Perceived conflict: here, a party becomes aware that their concern is being compromised by the other.

3. Felt conflict: the parties involved develop negative feelings about each other.

4. Manifest conflict: the actual conflict takes place here and the extent of it depends on how the parties react to each other.

5. Conflict aftermath: this can either be positive or negative. It is positive when the conflict is positively resolved. However, it becomes negative when not resolved but merely supressed and may escalate in the future, leading to more damage or dissolution of relationship.

Conflict management techniques

1. ***Avoidance:*** this involves finding a means that prevents the actual occurrence of conflict.

2. ***Accommodation:*** for peace to ensue, one party minimizes their needs, while maximizing that of the other.

3. ***Compromise:*** both parties sacrifice a portion of their concern or need.

4. ***Competition:*** this is a power – oriented approach, whereby a party focusses fully on meeting its needs while focussing less on meeting that of the other party.

5. ***Collaboration:*** this is concerned with placing maximum focus on both groups' concerns.

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